

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

news release

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FISH BIOLOGIST AWAITS LUNAR MATERIALS

A man who studies life beneath the seas is anxious to get his hands on a couple ounces of terrain from the lifeless, waterless moon.

When the Apollo 11 astronauts return from their historic moon landing, James W. Warren of the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will be waiting in Houston, Texas, at the Lunar Receiving Laboratory. His job will be to test the effects of lunar materials on earth's aquatic species. He will be the only representative of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on hand when tests begin at Houston's lunar receiving laboratory.

Warren, 35, a biologist based at Genoa, Wisc., will be working with species ranging from small protozoans to flat worms, oysters, shrimp and fathead and mummichog minnows.

The minnows, Warren says, are something like the "guinea pigs of the fish world"--much is known about their normal condition and they are in several other ways ideally suited to a role as a laboratory test species.

Warren emphasizes that experiments he will be performing are only preliminary, really to see if any hazards might exist if moon dust is sent out to other scientists for more comprehensive studies. Warren's tests will last about two months.

His work will begin after a crack team of physicists and geologists has spent three weeks intensively examining the material for gross cosmic radiation or chemical hazards.

These researchers will then distribute the materials as dust to the special test groups of the Inter-Agency Committee on Back Contamination. Warren's five-man aquatic team is one of these groups.

Warren says that the main objective of ICBC experiments with moon dust will be to detect any elements that may jeopardize life on earth.

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